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PHILIPPINE OBSERVATIONS

By Rev. Gilbert Reid, D.D., of Shanghai, China

For many years, during my residence in China, I have desired to visit the Philippine Islands, that I might study the American administration, and form an opinion as to the capability of the Filipino people to govern themselves and form a new and independent Philippine republic. This desire was met at the end of last year. My five months stay in the islands allowed me to gain aknowledge of events, conditions and people from a viewpoint different from that of others.

I approached the study of the Philippines from a Chinese angle. First of all I came in contact with the Chinese in Manila. I was asked to give several lectures before different Chinese clubs and the students and faculty of a Chinese school in Manila. Outside of Manila I visited thirteen places on different islands, where I was entertained by the Chinese at their clubs or private homes and where meetings were arranged for me to address. In this respect I had the advantage over other sightseers, globe-trotters and investigation commissions.

The Chinese form a small part of the population of the Philippines, though more than the number of other nationals, as American, Spanish, British, German or Japanese. And yet four-fifths of the trade is in Chinese hands. Many of these merchants came in days of Spanish occupation, and are now more familiar with the Spanish language than with English or American. Most of the small shops in the little villages or barrios are kept by Chinese rather than Filipinos. Much of the large business of the large cities is also managed by Chinese. Next come the British and then the Americans. The Chinese business man there as everywhere has a good reputation for industry, thrift and trustworthiness.

No provision is made for the full-grown Chinese to become naturalized. This is on the basis of American legislation. When Filipinos get a country of their own, these laws will probably be changed. Chinese laborers and farmers are not allowed in the Philippines, though every ship coming from Japan at present carries scores of Japanese laborers. The Philippine legislators are expected to pass a law this autumn allowing Chinese labor, and they expect that if the law is passed by Filipinos, it will be granted by the United States Congress. Chinese labor is needed, if for no other reason that it may counterbalance Japanese labor.

My first and quite natural interest, while in the Philippines, was in the Chinese, who reciprocated every kindness shown and sympathized with every trial endured for the good of their own country. Through them, in different places which I visited, a friendly approach was found to the hearts and homes, the struggles and hopes, of the original Philippine inhabitants, the rightful possessors of the soil.

In general, the Filipinos divide themselves into two classes, Christian Filipinos and non-Christian or pagan Filipinos. The former class is the larger and is becoming the ruling element in the country. Both classes are of Malay stock, having come from the Malay peninsula. Those who were Christianized under Spanish rule by the Catholic missionaries were later immigrants from the main land and had already been elevated by the high civilization of India and Cambodia, of China and the faith of Buddha.

During my five months in the Philippines I met men of both houses of the legislature, judges of the insular courts, governors of the provinces and officers of the constabulary. The men I met were the personification of courtesy, as are the Filipinos taken as a whole. The first impression of the Filipinos is always an agreeable one. They may lack the energy of the Chinese, but they have their own traits of character.

While my main contact in the Philippines was with the Chinese and Filipinos, I also had the chance to meet persons of other nationalities. Of these the chief were Americans.

The Americans I met were in the government civil service, in the army and navy, in the constabulary, on plantations, in education, in business and missions. As I mingled among Americans I found most of them were not altogether pleased at the way things are being run in the islands. Resignations were being presented all the time to different parts of the government. The dissatisfaction came from the rapid way in which Filipinos are superseding Americans in the government.

Wherever I went in the islands I was impressed with the remarkable skill and good sense, efficiency and generosity of American rule in the Philippines, unsurpassed by any other colonizing nation. There have been cases of cruel treatment of the natives, of unjust decisions, of immoral conduct, but the exceptions can not destroy the general record of honor and faithfulness.

I met prosperous Americans on hemp, cocoanut and sugar plantations. The hemp planters have their biggest rivals in the Japanese.

As to the Japanese I must testify to their energy, farsightedness and innate sense of politeness. Around the Davao Gulf on the eastern side of Mindinao Island, they have bought up within the last few years as many as seventy hemp plantations.

Some of the largest and oldest business houses are British. Americans have more shops, but not as many large wholesale firms. British influence is still strong among the Filipinos. When Americans began to colonize, the British resident on the islands was rather supercilious, but today he is compelled to bow to American worth.

Another old firm is Dutch, whose former head joined a Netherlands committee of my institute when I was in Rotterdam in 1898.

Naturally there are many Spanish, or persons of Spanish extraction, or Spanish who have become American citizens. They are in trade, in education, in religious work, on plantations, and in literary employments. They form a desirable element in the community. Those whom I met were charming and cultured.

In my tour of the islands, I also made a study of the religious work done by Roman Catholics and Protestants.

Protestant clergy have been in the Philippines only since the American occupation, a short period of only some twenty years. Protestant Christians have had the advantage of teaching a people already taught the main dogmas of Christianity by Roman Catholic Christians.

The progress made is surprising. Owing to the presence of American authorities, no opposition could lead to acts of persecution. The Philippine Islands have received from our American institutions the great benefit of religious liberty, as great a boon as that of general education or sanitary regulation.

Fortunately the Protestant missionaries have all come from one country; they are all Americans, or at least connected with American organizations.

Good missionary comity has been followed by Protestants; the work of one denomination does not overlap that of another. The islands are pretty well divided among Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists (American Board), United Brethren, the Disciples (Campbellites), and in one city a family of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Most of these bodies have united in one common organization for the Philippines, called Iglesia Evangelical Union. The Y. M. C. A. in Manila is also of this union kind in religion, but not in race. I have not mentioned the work of the American Episcopal Church, or as it is called in all the Far East, the American Church, for its policy has been different from that of other sects. Its distinguished bishop has been Bishop Brent, lately transferred to the diocese of Buffalo. He has not favored work among Roman Catholics or any form of proselyting.

Its work is among non-Christians—among the mountain tribes called Igorots and Negritos in the Island of Luzon, and the Moros (or Moslems), in the Islands of Mindinao and Jolo. Even the work among Moros is not yet of the proselyting kind.

I visited Silliman Institute in one of the southern Islands, called Negros. This institute or college was started by a

gift of Dr. Horace B. Silliman of Cohoes and for many years a trustee of Hamilton College. Twenty-four years ago I had urged him to help me to start an institute in China, as a light in all the Far East. He became so imbued with the idea that he started the institute in the Philippine Islands. The school was meant to be an industrial one, but at present, while giving instruction in industrial pursuits and in farming, it affords a complete training for entrance to the University of the Philippines. There are upwards of 800 students, some forty of whom are Chinese.

I made a study of Catholic work first in Manila and then in the provincial towns. I met the archbishop, an Irish-American, who had previously been a bishop in the island of Mindinao; also the superior of the Dominican order, the wealthiest of all the orders in the Philippines. I also met the Paulist Brothers, Spanish, who are the leaders of the educational work for training to the priesthood.

In Manila the chief feature of the work of the Roman Catholic Church, besides that of worship as indicated in the number of large churches, is educational. The Jesuits are at the head of the Manila Observatory, as they are of the Observatory in Shanghai, China. Through the meterorological observations those who travel by sea along the Asiatic coast are warned of coming storms.

The Jesuits also started one of the earliest colleges of Western learning in all the Far East, that of the College of San Josè, licensed in 1601 and made a "royal" college of Spain in 1722. The Jesuits were expelled from the Philippines in 1768 and allowed to return in 1859. The college became a branch of the University of Santo Tomas, named after Thomas Aquinas and frequently spoken of as the University of Manila, and distinguished from the University of the Philippines, established by the American government.

This Catholic university is under the Dominican order and was established in 1611. It comprises faculties of theology, canon law, civil law, philosophy and belles lettres, civil engineering and architecture, medicine, pharmacy and dentistry. It has a large hospital, and the best museum of natural history found in the Far East.

The Jesuits on their return to the Philippines started the Ateneo Municipal de Manila, a school of secondary instruction. The Dominicans have also a school of secondary instruction called San Juan de Letran, started in 1640. It has one of the finest school buildings in the islands.

Prior to American rule the Spanish government and the Catholic Church started two normal schools, one for male teachers and the other for female. The former was started in 1865 and was in charge of the Jesuits. The latter was started in 1868 (at Nueva Cacares) and was in charge of the Sisters of Charity. Another normal school for young ladies was started in Manila in 1892 and is in the charge of the Augustinian nuns of the Assumption.

The Catholic Church has many seminars for religious instruction, both in Manila and the provinces.

In many ways the work of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines has progressed since American occupation, and the presence of a competitive Protestant organization.

In place of Spanish priests there are now many priests from other countries, especially from the United States. This interest taken by Catholics of this country in the church work carried on in the countries of Asia is something new. It reacts on the home churches in a stimulating manner.

In the old days of Spanish rule the regular clergy connected with the orders, and generally called friars, outnumbered the secular clergy. The friars, moreover, obeyed the heads of the great monastic orders, rather than the bishops. At present the commands of bishop and of father superior seldom conflict. At the time of American occupation two-thirds of the friars left the islands, but since then many have returned or others connected with the orders in other countries have taken their place. There are today more Filipino priests, not friars, than under Spanish rule.

The orders were great land owners, and the purchase of friar lands (410,000 acres) became one of the most delicate of American tasks. Some estates were left to the orders. The chief land possessing orders have been the Dominicans, Augustinians and Recolletos, a branch of Augustinians.

The Franciscans by their rules cannot own land. Besides these four orders there are today four other orders, Jesuits, Capuchins, Benedictans and Paulists, a branch of the Lazarist order, named from Saint Vincent de Paul.

There are nine dioceses in the islands, three being established in 1910. Most of the bishops are Americans.

Outside of the non-Christian or Moslem tribes the whole population is Christian, and of these nearly all are Roman Catholics.

Since American victory over Spain, the larger educational work in the Philippines has been carried on by the United States government and the Filipino insular government. This work deserves special consideration.

There has first been a contrast between the American and the Spanish systems of education among conquered peoples. With the Spanish the system of education was religious as much as it was secular; there was a union of church and state. The American system of education introduced among the peoples of the Philippines has been the public school system existing in most of the states of the Union. It has been secular, not religious; church and state are separated.

How completely separated is governmental education in the Philippines from everything pertaining to religion is seen in the following law:

> No teacher or other person shall teach or criticise the doctrines of any church, religious sect or denomination, or shall attempt to influence the pupils for or against any church or religious sect in any public school established under this act. If any teacher shall intentially violate this section, he or she shall, after due hearing, be dismissed from public service.

This law seemed necessary to the men at Washington in the War Department or a clash at the very beginning would have taken place with the Church of Rome, unless all the teachers had been Roman Catholics able to teach the doctrines of their church. This alternative would have offended the Protestant element in this country more than the secularity of the public school system.

The American school system introduced into the Philippines has been democratic in kind, while the Spanish or Roman Catholic system in the old days was aristocratic. Americans have aimed at general education as the basis of a democratic system of government; the Spanish sought only for the select training of the choice few, as fitting to an aristocratic system of government. In Spanish days there was no middle class, but a few aristocratic families, Spanish, Mestizos, or Filipino, all nicely educated, polished, polite and dominating, and the many poorer illiterate subservient to their masters.

The American idea is contrary to the grain of most peoples who are cultured, in all lands, and especially in their colonizing attempts. Americans have been the first to democratize colonial and subject races. All other nations, Spanish, British, French, Dutch, German, have been slow to educate the masses and so give them a place in self-government. A man who is better off than others rather likes to stay so. Thus Lord Milner writing of education in Egypt, once said:

> Egypt has yet to create a native professional class (it was then alien, not native). She has yet to educate the men who are destined to fill the government service. When these urgent needs have been supplied, it will be time enough to think of general public instruction.

It seems to me that the struggle everywhere is not so much between democracy and autocracy as between democracy and aristocracy. The aristocrats are always more than the autocrats. It is this larger number in every country that stands in the way of general education or the uplift of the masses.

A third distinction between Spanish and American education in the Philippines is in the use of languages. The Spanish taught the Spanish language; Americans have taught the English, or, more exactly, the American language. Moreover, Americans in occupying the Philippines compelled the subject Filipinos to learn and use the language of the conquerors, the language of the schools already existing was Spanish. This was to give place to American books

and American talk. But this is the rule everywhere, only the Filipinos have for some reason clung to the Spanish language. More grown-up Chinese in the islands speak Spanish than English. When I was in the Philippines early this year a bill was presented in the Legislature to require Spanish in the public schools. This was amended so as to make it an elective study.

Charles B. Elliott says:

> The opposition to the English language has always been much more active than is popularly supposed, and under strong pressure the time when it should become the official language of the courts was extended until 1912. The proceedings (in the Assembly) have always been in Spanish, and the elaborate *Diario de Sessiones*, which corresponds to the *Congressional Record*, is printed in the Spanish language. One result of the creation of the new legislature under the 1916 law, with a membership solely Filipino, will be that the laws will be Spanish in form and substance as well as language, and that the English language will be ignored by the legislative department of the government.

Mr. Elliott points out that when Americans first took rule in the Philippines not more than 10 per cent of the inhabitants were able to speak and write Spanish; also,no vernacular language was sufficiently current. Thus "the adoption of English as the medium of instruction in the schools met with general approval," and then in a footnote he adds: "The future of the English language in the Philippines is still uncertain."

During my first days in Manila I was conducted through the great University of the Philippines by one of the American professors still remaining on the faculty of the university. Here I saw no ancient seat of learning gradually developing through the centuries, as are the Catholic institutions. The University of the Philippines is only eight years old. Nothing like it is found anywhere in the world. This great government hall of learning is a marvel of American energy and enterprise, vivified by a spirit of generosity also unparalleled in colonizing undertakings. This university had its beginnings in 1911. It is the proud peak of the hill of learning. It has separate courses or colleges of liberal arts, engineering, medicine and surgery, dentistry, veterinary

science, pharmacy, fine arts, education, law, agriculture and forestry.

The College of Medicine and Surgery (started before the university) needs to keep a larger body of experts than the other departments of the university. The experts are to be versed in tropical diseases. It is likely that American experts will now turn to China to be connected with the four medical colleges of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Connected with this medical training is the Philippine General Hospital, whose physicians are now all Filipinos, and with this hospital there is conducted a Philippine nurses' training school, directly under the supervision of the public service, an important branch of the government. The hospital has been erected at government expense and the nurses, over 100, are supported also by the government. The hospital buildings are of reinforced concrete, and as cold weather is unknown, the patients have plenty of fresh air and do not fear a bath.

Charles B. Elliott says:

> The Filipino young women seem to possess in a high degree the qualities which fit them for professional nurses and they have won the unqualified approval of their instructors and the gratitude and appreciation of the patients for whom they have rendered such faithful and skillful service.

The Bureau of Science is the center of expert scientific training with suitable apparatus and laboratories.

The library is a vast collection of literature in many languages drawn from all parts of the world. One is amazed that such a collection, properly indexed, could have been brought together in so few years.

The College of Agriculture and Forestry is located at Los Banos in the region of earthquakes and volcanoes, to the south of Manila. Some Chinese students studying there conducted the Chinese consul general, his family and myself to inspect the work done. Most of the professors are Americans. More would be given instruction if the university and the government gave it better support. Through this failure several very competent men have gone elsewhere; two have entered British service in the Straits Settlements.

The work done is of supreme importance, along with the more general enlightenment given by the Bureau of Agriculture.

Other agricultural experimental stations have been started in Luzon Island, all under American management.

In Manila there is a trade school, distinct from the university, established in 1901. This is the head of industrial training in the school system of the archipelago.

In Manila there is also a fine normal school established in the same year as the trade school. This is distinct from the normal schools of the Jesuit order, started in Spanish days. Here teachers are being taught to do their work in the provincial schools.

The Philippine school system consists of primary, intermediate and secondary or high schools, beyond which is the great university of the Philippines. This system was introduced by Americans as more adaptable to American ideas of government than to more restricted system of Spanish church agents. Necessarily all the teachers at first were Americans, but of late years, and more and more so under the Wilson administration, the teachers are predominantly Filipino. Where Americans are still retained is as superintendents of schools in the provinces, and as supervising teachers in high schools.

In 1916 there were 4,400 schools, all but 350 or more being of primary grade. The number of teachers was 10,250 of whom 500 were Americans, these being in the higher grade. The number of pupils was 625,000, this out of a population of 9,000,000, and where the children of school age may be about 1,200,000.

It is in the thought, the audacity, the resolve to start such a system of schools that the United States government stands apart from all colonizing nations. The rapidity with which the work has been carried forward, as well as the suddenness in which it was begun, surprises even the American "hustler." Had it not been for this school system Filipinos would have seen only from afar the glory-dawn of national independence.

For efficiency in the school system of the Philippines, particularly in the university and for general supervision, it depends, it seems to me, on retaining the most capable of Americans. Even if the Philippines became an independent republic, there is no reason for excluding men of science and scholarship who are Americans. In fact, the more experts, the better. It may be that when the Filipinos are their own masters they may open the door to science, as to goodness, from all the world.

The great question for the peoples of the Philippine Islands, as for all peoples, is that of national independence and autonomous government. My acquaintance with these peoples, and with strangers dwelling within their doors or aliens exercising authority, is too brief to deserve much consideration.

Certainly most of the leading Filipinos have for many years desired independence, a most laudable ambition. They fought to secure it at the hands of the Spanish during Spanish rule. They again fought for it at the hands of Americans, when Spanish rule gave place to American rule. In both cases the warring Filipinos were called insurgents or insurrectos. Their war for independence has been spoken of as a reform, as a revolt, as insurrection, as revolution, as rebellion. The fighting done was not only for independence, but for democracy, to establish a Philippine republic.

When Filipinos failed in their fighting in both cases, the method pursued to secure the same end has been a political, diplomatic and peaceful one—the use of reason rather than that of force. The end has not been reached, but has been approached. Filipinos have not yet a republic or a nation of their own, but they have a large measure of self-government, of independent action, which perhaps is just as good as a professed autonomy, unless the world war is to usher in a world millenium.

American rule, which has stood in the way of Philippine aspirations for independence, has been of an evolutionary kind. First, there came the military régimé from 1898 to 1901, a period of military governors. Next there came the commission government from 1901 to 1916, a period of civil

governors or governors-general. This period is divided into two parts, that down to 1907, when there was a Philippine legislature as well as a small select commission. Finally in 1916 there came two legislative bodies of Filipinos alone, a senate and a house of representatives.

In the last period the Filipino aspiration for greater autonomous government has been met, but not the aspiration for complete independence. The fact, however, that Filipinos have a legislature of their own is looked upon as the dawning glow of an independence day, and the credit has been given to the Democratic administration, which began in the United States in 1913, and in the Philippines by the selection of Francis Burton Harrison as governor-general.

The policy of the United States government in dealing with the independence of the Philippine Islands has been one of benevolence, and this just as much under Presidents McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft as under President Wlson.

The Jones bill of 1916 did not declare for Philippine independence any more clearly than had McKinley or Roosevelt, Taft or Root. Independence is still of the future.

Mr. Kalaw, in a series of articles in the *Manila Times* says:

> While the act did not grant what all the Filipinos asked for it did grant the fundamental principle for which the Filipinos have struggled since Admiral Dewey's arrival—the principle of constitutional government and the recognition of their right to independence.

Mr. Taft, when governor in 1903, used this language:

> Whether an autonomy or independence or quasi independence shall ultimately follow in these islands ought to depend solely upon the question, "Is it best for the Filipino people and their welfare?"

There is no doubt of the prevailing wish of Filipinos of the educated classes being that of complete independence. Perhaps I should say the wish as expressed in public. Privately I met several who felt that perhaps it would be for their welfare if they remained content with the self-government already granted and retained the paternal protection of the United States.

As to the Moros who predominate in the Department of Sulu and Mindinao, I was told that probably so far as they have any opinion at all they would prefer to remain under American control than under that of Filipinos.

The majority of Americans living in the islands think that the American government has already gone too far and that the Philippines would go to pieces or disappear if all American oversight should be removed. At the same time, many Americans who are engaged in the moral and religious uplift of the Philippines sympathize with the aspirations of Filipinos but doubt the expediency of complete independence.

The Chinese with whom I talked have of course no great admiration for American legislation as directed to Chinese both in the United States and in the Philippines, but are clever enough to see that further elimination of American control might work disaster to all interested.

As soon as Filipinos gain complete independence they must have diplomatic relations with most of the nations of the world. There will be many a diplomatic battle and perhaps even a military battle, unless wars hereafter are to be prohibited from the planet earth.

It might as well be stated that since the Japanese began to go into the Mindinao Island and buy up the rich hemp plantations around Davao and bring in one load after another of Japanese laborers, there are Filipinos as well as Americans and Chinese, who wonder what would happen if the American government withdrew and a few Japanese down there in Davao should accidentally get killed by some Moros or wild mountaineers. This does not mean that sensible Japanese plot a war with the United States in order to get possession of the Philippines, but only that the withdrawal of Americans would be a source of delight to many Japanese.

I only quote one Japanese, Dr. Nitobe, who headed an investigating commission to the Philippines in 1916. He said:

> So long as the Philippines are held by the United States, Japan is not worrying much about the islands. At the same

time it would rather have the islands than not, but, so long as they are held by the United States, Japan will not go to war in the hope of thus acquiring them, holding that they are not worth the blood sacrifice that would be entailed, apart from the incidental financial expense. Nevertheless, should the United States withdraw, Japan would expect to exercise a controlling interest in the islands and should they be in danger of passing into the hands of some other power, Japan would not stand idly by.